
**Rombo Mountain Fire
Bitterroot National Forest
News Release**

Northern Rockies
Incident Management
Team
Larry Svalberg
Incident Commander

For Immediate Release

**Contact: Fire Information
406-821-0082**

Date: August 13, 2007 9 p.m.

Rombo Mountain Fire Grows to 5,500 Acres

West Fork, Mont. – The Rombo Mountain Fire grew an estimated 232 acres on Monday. Heavy smoke conditions from fires in Idaho helped to reduce fire spread during the morning hours. After the smoke decreased, fire behavior increased with single tree and group tree torching, short duration crown runs and spotting. Fire spread was primarily to the east and north. The fire also spread to the south via rollouts and short uphill crown runs. Helicopter bucket drops were used to limit fire spread and to contain spot fires after smoke cleared to allow adequate visibility. The fire was caused by lightning on July 31. It is located 16 miles south of Conner, MT and 4 miles northeast of Painted Rocks Lake.

Equipment and hand crews continued to construct, improve and hold direct and indirect line west and northwest of the fire. This line follows Road 5715A for approximately 2 miles and other old roads have been utilized where possible. The line continues northerly from a switchback on road 5715A through Buck Creek Saddle following a ridge in a northeasterly direction to the 2000 Fat Creek Fire burned area. Structure protection maintenance and assessments continued Monday.

Plans for Tuesday are to keep the fire east of the 5715A road and utilize helicopter bucket drops as necessary; contain any spot fires across the fire line; improve the indirect fire line to the northeast from Rombo Creek to the 2000 Fat Creek fire; perform ground recon in the Little Boulder Creek area south of the fire to identify possible locations to conduct ground operations; and complete structure protection wrapping of Medicine Lookout Tower, if conditions allow.

The closure order remains in effect and fire and forest officials ask the public to cooperate with the closure for public and firefighter safety. Maps and full descriptions of the closed area are available at Forest offices, and on line at www.fs.fed.us/r1/bitterroot. The Forest is under

Stage 2 fire restrictions which prohibit campfires and smoking other than in a vehicle, building or cleared area due to the high fire danger.

Though there are a number of active fires with necessary closures, most of the Bitterroot National Forest is still open for hiking and fishing. Contact your nearest Ranger District Office or the Bitterroot National Forest Supervisor's Office for current recreation activity opportunities.

A total of 166 personnel are assigned to the fire and additional firefighting crews and helicopters to provide support have been requested, but may not be available due to the large number of fires burning in Montana and other states at this time.

Public and firefighter safety are the highest priority that Svalberg's incident management team, in coordination with the local forest personnel, take into consideration when planning and implementing fire management actions.

SPECIAL NOTICE

There will be a Rombo Mountain Fire Information Meeting Tuesday, August 14, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the Painted Rocks Boat Ramp. The Fire Management Team will give a briefing on the fire and answer questions. Also on hand to answer questions will be representatives from the West Fork and Painted Rocks Volunteer Fire Departments, the West Fork Ranger District and the Ravalli County Sheriff's Department.

Also, there will be a nearly identical meeting Wednesday, August 15, 2007 at the Sula Clubhouse. In addition to the Fire Management Team, representatives from the Sula Rural Volunteer Fire Department, the Sula Ranger District and the Ravalli County Sheriff's Department will be on hand to answer questions.

For additional information call Rombo Mountain Fire information at 821-0082 or visit the website, www.inciweb.org.

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